

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for producing a colorant comprising a hydrophobic coloring matter substance, an amphoteric electrolyte and water, said process comprising:

dissolving the hydrophobic coloring matter substance in an organic solvent miscible with water to obtain a coloring matter substance solution in which the concentration of the hydrophobic coloring matter substance is in the range of 1-10 wt%;

contacting said coloring matter substance solution with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin to obtain a purified coloring matter substance solution;

adding dropwise, while stirring, said purified coloring matter substance solution into a solution containing an amphoteric electrolyte in de-ionized water at a concentration of 10 wt% or less to obtain a water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance;

removing the organic solvent component from the water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance by an azeotropic distillation of water and said organic solvent, while supplying de-ionized water and/or an organic solvent if necessary, under an ambient or a reduced pressure, to obtain an aqueous solution containing the coloring matter substance and the amphoteric electrolyte; and

subjecting said aqueous solution containing a

coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte to high-speed centrifugation.

2. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the solution containing the amphoteric electrolyte in de-ionized water is the aqueous solution containing said coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte.

3. A process according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amino acid.

4. A process according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amphoteric electrolyte having an isoelectric point of 6 or higher.

5. A process according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said hydrophobic substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is arginine, histidine, glycine or combination thereof.

6. A colorant obtainable by the process according to any one of Claims 1 to 5.